



# Illinois Department of Transportation

Office of the Secretary  
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December 10, 1996

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FHWA-94-2289-7

FHWA Docket No. MC-96-41  
Federal Highway Administration  
Office of Chief Counsel  
Room 4232, HCC-10  
400 Seventh Street, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20590

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) submits the following comments in response to the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) notice of proposed rulemaking entitled "Parts and Accessories Necessary for Safe Operation; Development of a North American Standard for Protection Against Shifting or Falling Cargo" published in the October 17, 1996 Federal Register.

In December 1995, we expressed our concerns to FHWA about the apparent inadequacies of the current regulations in 49 CFR Part 393, which regulate standards for protection of shifting and falling cargo from commercial motor vehicles. IDOT had previously commissioned a research project (the Southern Illinois University research referenced in the notice) to examine the specific problem of proper securement for metal coils. Our comments (see attachment) and the research analysis were forwarded to FHWA along with IDOT's request for a reevaluation of the existing standards.

IDOT supports the FHWA position that a rulemaking is necessary to overhaul the cargo securement regulations. While our sponsored research has indicated a need to revamp the securement regulations, the notice implies that the FHWA research found similar problems.

The use of a diverse "drafting group" to develop guidelines and performance standards based upon current research appears to be a viable method of regulatory development. The participants in the existing drafting group should ensure the standards are based on sound engineering principles. The output should be both user friendly and enforceable.

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Approximately 50 steel coils annually break loose from their securement while being transported on Illinois highways. This is a definite problem in this state and is a specific example of the need for increased securement requirements when transporting objects on state highways. Because of the continued cargo loss incidents on our highways, IDOT remains especially interested in the outcome of the cargo securement revision efforts. IDOT will continue to monitor the progress of this docket and provide input through its Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance representative.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this advance notice of proposed rulemaking.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kirk Brown', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kirk Brown  
Secretary

Attachment

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